

VZCZCXRO9628  
RR RUEHPA  
DE RUEHOS #0210/01 1171011  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
R 271011Z APR 09  
FM AMCONSUL LAGOS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0747  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 0351  
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0040  
RUEHOR/AMEMBASSY GABORONE 0103  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE  
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000210

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, AF/EX, AF/RSA AND INR/AA  
STATE PASS FOR USAID/AFR/WA, AFR/SD, AND EGAT MOTT  
STATE PASS TO USTR-AGAMA  
GABARONE FOR PHIL DROUIN  
DOC FOR 3317/ITA/OA/KBURRESS AND 3130/USFC/OIO/ANESA/DHARRIS  
TREASURY FOR PETERS AND HALL  
RHMFIUU/COMUSNAVEUR NAPLES IT FOR ANAGGIAR  
RHPHGB/COMUSNAVEUR NAPLES IT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/30/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [EWWT](#) [MASS](#) [NI](#)  
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: SHIPOWNERS BLAME FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR  
NEGLECTING MARITIME SECURITY

REF: A. 08 LAGOS 434  
[1](#)B. LAGOS 192

Classified By: Consul General Donna Blair, Reasons 1.4 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: On March 24, representatives of the Indigenous Shipowners' Association of Nigeria (ISAN) told members of the Africa Partnership Station (APS) team and Pol-EconOff that maritime security is not taken seriously by the GON. The chairman of ISAN, Isaac Jolapamo, called the failure to enforce existing maritime and commercial law, the widespread oil theft in which the government is complicit, and the failure to end the simmering conflict in the Niger Delta as the greatest threats to maritime security. He added that "Nigeria's wealth is being funneled out of the country by Nigerian elites," and urged the United States to use its influence to encourage Interpol to "stop the money laundering." Jolapamo also addressed the severe shortage of trained seafarers and said his organization would welcome and support any initiative to give Nigerian youth training and qualifications in maritime trades. Jolapamo identified a number of potential areas for future cooperation such as capacity building in maritime law, monitoring of smuggling and poaching, identifying measures to address money-laundering, and maritime education initiatives. Post believes that continued engagement with ISAN would be productive. End Summary.

No Appreciation for Marine Resources  
-----

[1](#)2. (U) Members of the APS team from the USS Nashville and Pol-EconOff met with representatives of ISAN on March 24 to discuss maritime security in Nigerian waters. The Chairman of ISAN, Isaac Jolapamo, welcomed APS but argued that Nigeria's maritime problems were rooted in "attitudinal" problems on the part of the GON and required "political" not military solutions. According to Jolapamo, the GON's horizon ends at the coast. This is evidenced by the GON's failure to enforce

even the existing maritime and commercial laws and to take no action against pirates, poachers and sea robbers, he said. The failure to protect marine resources, Jolapamo argued, is directly related to the government's failure to "understand the value of the sea." He added that until the local population was integrated into the maritime industry and had a stake in it, these attitudinal problems would persist. He admitted that the industry needed to do more to educate the government about the economic potential of the maritime sector. Jolapamo appealed for help building indigenous capacity with respect to maritime law and finding ways to collaborate to reduce smuggling and poaching.

#### Piracy Related to Crisis in Niger Delta

-----

13. (C) According to Jolapamo 50 per cent of the threats to maritime commerce in Nigerian waters would be eliminated by ending the crisis in the Niger Delta. Jolapamo admitted that piracy itself pre-dated the unrest in the Niger Delta, but insisted if peace were restored to the region, piracy would decline dramatically. Jolapamo went on to say that the troubles in the Niger Delta were related to oil theft; adding that the locals believe the International Oil Companies (IOCs) and Federal Government are complicit in the theft, which was why there is no effective law enforcement in the region. Pressed for details, Jolapamo would only say that some people thought they "were bigger than the law." Jolapamo added that the solution to all Nigeria's problems would be to get rid of the oil.

LAGOS 00000210 002 OF 002

#### Nigerian Wealth Siphoned Off

-----

14. (C) Nigeria's wealth is being siphoned off by Nigerian elites to bank accounts in Europe and the United States, Jolapamo claimed. He appealed to the US to help build capacity to address the issue of money laundering and to encourage Interpol to use its resources to put an end to it. (Note: Other interlocutors have reported to Pol-EconOff that ransom money for crews seized in Nigerian waters has been paid into accounts in international banks. (Ref A) End Note.)

#### Severe Shortage of Trained Mariners

-----

15. (U) Returning to his thesis that GON interest in maritime resources and industry would not be great until more of the population is involved in maritime trades, Jolapamo pointed out that there is an extreme shortage of native seaman to man even the small number of ships under Nigerian flag. Jolapamo said ISAN would welcome and support any initiative to give Nigerian youth training and qualifications in maritime trades.

16. (C) Comment: Although the Nigerian shipping industry is weak, ISAN is a credible, independent organization and Post believes that continued engagement with it would be productive. One potential area of co-operation would be to work together with ISAN to help them develop a maritime training program for unemployed Nigerian youth. Such training would target qualifying youths for non-officer grade jobs aboard the merchant fleets of the world currently suffering from a severe manpower shortage. End comment.

17. (U) This cable was cleared by Embassy Abuja.  
BLAIR